

**WEST COAST SEAFOOD PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION**

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*April 12, 2012*

Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones

Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International

Environmental and Scientific Affairs

U.S. Department of State

2201 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20520

Dear Assistant Secretary Jones:

I am writing on behalf of the West Coast Seafood Processors Association (WCSPA) to express our concern with the apparent willingness of the Department of State to allow the lapse of a key element of the Treaty Between The Government Of Canada And The Government Of The United States Of America On Pacific Coast Albacore Tuna Vessels And Port Privileges (Albacore Treaty). WCSPA represents U.S.-owned seafood processors and supporting businesses located in Oregon, Washington, and California. Our members are involved in the Albacore Treaty regime through the purchase of albacore from both U.S. and Canadian fishermen and through our participation in the fishery management process via the Pacific Fishery Management Council. I have personally represented our members and other U.S. seafood processors as part of the U.S. delegation to Albacore Treaty discussions with Canada for over ten years.

A key element of the Albacore Treaty is the reciprocal fishing regime, which must be renewed this year. Under that regime, vessels from the U.S. are permitted to harvest fish in the Canadian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), land those fish in designated Canadian ports, and otherwise receive port privileges in Canada that are not available to vessels of other nations. Similarly, Canadian vessels can fish in the U.S. EEZ, land those fish in designated U.S. ports, and receive port privileges. The existence of this reciprocal regime has led to cooperation between the U.S. and Canada on data collection, enforcement, and in international forums charged with the conservation and management of albacore tuna. Given that the combined U.S. and Canadian catch of albacore tuna is only a fraction of the total world catch, this latter element is especially important.

Further, due to the transboundary nature of many fish stocks on the west coast, a continued positive working relationship with Canada is crucial. We already have in place three other international fisheries agreements (for halibut, salmon, and hake/whiting) and we are developing additional cooperative scientific efforts on sardines. Eventually, we may be able to expand scientific cooperation to several species of Pacific groundfish. As fisheries conservation and management becomes more complex, the ability to have a cooperative working relationship on transboundary species becomes more important.

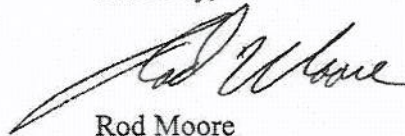
From an economic standpoint, Canadian landings of albacore in U.S. ports have a small but measurable positive impact. Several of our members purchase Canadian albacore, which is then

sold in the world market. West coast ports supply food, parts, and some fuel to Canadian vessels.

For these reasons, we are alarmed that the Department appears willing to allow the reciprocal fishing regime to elapse, thereby threatening the cooperative relationship we have with Canada and removing economic benefits. There is no indication that the loss of Canadian catch and landings will be made up by increased U.S. catch and landings. While there have been anecdotal reports of Canadian harassment of U.S. fishing vessels, few details have been provided to enforcement authorities and U.S. harvesters apparently have been unwilling to engage in constructive dialogue with their Canadian counterparts with a view towards resolving these problems. Instead, at least one U.S. harvesting group has invested in a paid lobbyist to seek permanent termination of reciprocal fishing.

We recognize that there is a need to acknowledge the concerns of fishermen regarding the Albacore Treaty but you also need to recognize the views of other constituents in the processing and shore-side support sectors. For the various reasons provided above, we urge you to actively seek a constructive solution to any differences between the U.S. and Canada regarding the Albacore Treaty and not endanger our current and future fisheries relationship by allowing the reciprocal fishing regime to lapse.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rod Moore", written in a cursive style.

Rod Moore  
Executive Director